

East County Citizens Advisory Board

Annual Report



September 2005 - August 2006



**Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center
3300 Briggs Chaney Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20904**

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/eastco

Introduction

The ***East County Citizens Advisory Board*** had an outstanding year of service and activity in 2005/2006. We had, for the third consecutive year, a very successful Student Art Show, co-sponsored by the Eastern Montgomery Regional Center, the Fairland Public Library and the Fairland Community Center. We met with East County residents at the Colesville Strawberry Festival, during Burtonsville Day and at other celebrations and activities. We had an important meeting concerning the future of the Burtonsville Shopping Center, in which over 70 residents actively participated, hearing from Chris Jones, representing the owners of the shopping center, as well as those who have concerns about its future development. Our committees have worked very hard to bring to the attention of our elected leaders the needs of our neighbors for health care, education, housing and relieving traffic congestion.

In the coming year, we expect to address issues relating to business development, protection of our waterways and environment, developments at and around the Federal Research Center, the Bi-County Transit-way (aka the Inner Purple Line) and ongoing traffic concerns. We also hope to hear from our neighbors regarding issues of importance to them.

Our first and our most important ongoing task will be to improve our communications with the residents of the East County. This includes greater use of electronic communications, making it easier to find our website, and developing active communication with East County leaders, volunteers, business people and citizens. We are dedicated to being the advocates for the needs of the people of the East County.

Mission

The purpose of the ECCAB is to serve the residents in the eastern region of Montgomery County, generally encompassing the Master Plan Areas of Cloverly, Fairland, and White Oak. The region is bounded on the west by Northwest Branch, which runs approximately parallel to Layhill Road, on the north by Ednor Road, on the east by the Howard and Prince George's County lines, and on the south by Interstate 495.

The Board shall fulfill this purpose in various ways, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Serve as a liaison between residents of the Region, the Montgomery County Executive, the Montgomery County Government, and various other agencies and officials;

2. Advise the County Executive, Montgomery County Government and various other agencies and officials, of the Region's needs and priorities and encourage their responsiveness to the Region;
3. Make policy recommendations and provide input to the planning and goal setting functions of the County Executive, Montgomery County Government, and various other agencies and officials;
4. Establish channels of communication with community groups, agencies, and individual citizens;
5. Collaborate with other government and community agencies and citizen advisory boards;
6. Educate the Region about government structure, services, community problems, needs and issues;
7. Be visible, accessible, and accountable to the Region;

Monitor current legislative issues affecting the Region to ensure that the needs of the Region are reflected and take an active role in legislative advocacy, where appropriate, and communicate these needs to the County Executive, Montgomery County Government, and various other agencies and officials

Membership

The ECCAB consists of 18 members who are appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council. The membership also includes Associate Members who participate as non-voting members in Board meetings. The membership of the 2005-2006 ECCAB was as follows:

Chair: Stephen Jacobs Esq.
Vice Chair: Samuel A. Foster Jr.
Secretary: Freda Hartman
Parliamentarian: Ann W. Williams

Members

Kim Bobola	David Kelly, Esq.
Tracy Dupree-Davis Esq.	Will Kenlaw
G. Stanley Doore	Barbara Medina
Freda Hartman	Robert Newsome
Colleen Ionata	Rochelle L. Rollins
Gladstone James	William Strassberger
Kim Jones	Andre Carl Whisenton

Associate Members

Sharon Hemstreet
Zulema Joseph

Eastern Montgomery Regional Center Staff:

Anise Key Brown, Director,
Charles Crisostomo, Assistant Director,
Anjoo Chohda, Senior Administrative Aide,
Gwen Haney, Program Specialist II,
Boris Calderon, Principal Administrative Aide,

Monthly Meetings

The ECCAB meets on the first Wednesday of each month, except August, at the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center, 3300 Briggs Chaney Road, Silver Spring, MD.

Each month the agenda generally includes:

Resident's Forum (first 15 minutes of each meeting)
A Special Presentation or Briefing
The Chair's Report
Committee Reports
Director's/Staff Report that includes updates from the County Executive
County Council Update

Minutes of recent ECCAB meetings are available online at:
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/eastco, and then click "Citizen Advisory Board and Committees."

Capital Improvement Projects

In June of 2005, the ECCAB conducted a Forum to discuss Capital Improvements planned or desired for the East County region. On July 21, 2005, the Chair, Steve Jacobs, then met with the County Executive's Office to deliver the following ECCAB priorities:

1. The timely completion of the new Elementary School in the Hillandale-White Oak area.
2. Timely progress on the renovation of Paint Branch High School.
3. Timely progress with the site planning and design for the new Recreation/Community Center in White Oak.
4. The renovation of the Good Hope Neighborhood Center.
5. Continued progress on the site selection for the urgently needed full service Police Station for East County.
6. Concern for road improvements along State and County roadways as construction of the new Food and Drug Administration (FDA) headquarters progresses. Mass transit improvements must also be seriously considered.
7. Pedestrian safety improvements around East County schools, particularly in the vicinity of Paint Branch High School.

Committee Meetings

The East County Citizens Advisory Board has established three (3) standing committees to address resident issues and new county initiatives. Below are the Services, Outreach and Community and Economic Development Committees' summary reports.

Services Committee:

The Services Committee handles issues related to education, aging, health, human services, public safety, and recreation. The Committee is open to members of the community and meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. at the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center.

Membership

The Services Committee consists of 5 members of the East County Citizens Advisory Board who self-identify their committee interests. The Committee members include:

Rochelle L. Rollins, (Chair)

Colleen Ionata
Kim Bobola
Ann Williams
G. Stanley Doore
Robert Newsome

Education

- **Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget**

In February 2006, the Services Committee recommended that ECCAB oppose the County Executive's budget proposal for school construction and modernization and support the school system's capital budget request. School officials, PTAs, and leaders of the Northeast Consortium were concerned that the County Executive's plan fell short \$81.6 million in fiscal 2007 and would delay 51 projects identified by Superintendent Jerry Weast. ECCAB voted to send a letter in March 2006 to the County Executive and Council requesting full funding of the school system's CIP budget proposal. That month, the County Executive was able to adjust his budget proposal so as to include full funding of the school system's CIP budget request. ECCAB then sent a follow up letter to the County Executive in appreciation for revising his budget proposal. In May 2006, County Council approved the budget that fully funded the school's six-year capital budget request.

- **Northeast Consortium (NEC)**

In October 2005, the Services Committee gave their monthly report to ECCAB on critical issues discussed in September at the Northeast Consortium (NEC) meeting. First, NEC parents and leaders had asked whether the number of incidents of teen violence was rising. This question had emerged in light of the stabbing death of a Rockville High School student on the campus of Blake High School after a football game on Friday, September 23, 2005. Second, County Executive's office, County Council, and the Montgomery County State Prosecutor's Office were commended for their candid discussions with school officials related to violence prevention. Finally, NEC Vice President Phil Kaufman had urged ECCAB and others to get the word out about attending MCPS strategic planning forums on the school system operating budget including the resources allocated for school safety.

In February 2006, the Services Committee gave another monthly report to ECCAB on the Northeast Consortium (NEC) meeting held in January. This NEC meeting focused on the School Choice program among Northeast Consortium high schools. Of concern was the unevenness in demographics in East County and how this unevenness would play out in the School Choice program. To address this concern, the school system had several ideas on the table, including moving certain programs available at particular NEC high schools to other schools (i.e. ESL program from Springbrook to Blake High School). The school system determined that additional time was needed for vetting these options. Another focus of the meeting was the announcement that the Study Circle program was underway at Paint Branch High School. Students and parents were invited to participate in a Study Circles dialogue on this topic: Do racial and cultural differences impact our schools?

Transportation/Public Safety

- **Traffic Light**

In collaboration with the Colesville Civic Association, ECCAB voted to send a letter to the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) asking that the traffic signal in the right east bound lane of Randolph Road at the New Hampshire intersection be removed from service. In response to this request DPWT, in coordination with the State highway Administration, agreed to remove the light. This removal has resulted in improved traffic flow.

- **Crosswalks and Traffic Signal**

At the November 2005 meeting, the Services Committee took action after the Calverton Citizens Association came to us with a request that a signal should be installed at the intersection of Cherry Hill Road and O'Fallon Street for pedestrian safety and access to the bus stop and that the streets be striped for crosswalks.

ECCAB voted to send a letter to the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPWT) on behalf of the Citizens Association. In a letter of response on December 5, County officials indicated that no crosswalk would be provided and no traffic signal would be installed. However, a county-appointed Pedestrian Safety Committee would conduct a study of these concerns in the latter part of 2006. The Services Committee plans to follow up with DPWT with regard to this study.

- **Paint Branch High School**

Over the past two years, East County citizens have voiced concerns about pedestrian safety at Paint Branch High School. In response, the Services Committee has kept an eye on this situation and continued to convey these citizens' concerns to the County Executive. In a November 2005 meeting with County Executive's designee Bruce Romer, the ECCAB chair identified as a worry the time of day when students come out of Paint Branch High School. Curiously, students have no sidewalks as pedestrians and no guard rails as protection from traffic along the western side of Old Columbia Pike. To remedy this situation, the Services Committee has asked for sidewalks and guard rails for pedestrian safety and to have speed reduction to 25 mph at the beginning and end of the school day. To date, this request has not yet been addressed. The Services Committee will continue to monitor this situation.

- **Banneker Middle School**

The Services Committee has continued to question whether additional safety measures are needed at the intersection of Old Columbia Pike at Perrywood Drive. In the 2005 session of Council, ECCAB endorsed Councilmember Marilyn Praisner's budget for the installation of a traffic circle at this location. Construction of the traffic circle was completed in August 2006.

Councilmember Praisner had also requested crosswalk lines, guardrails, and speed limit signs to be part of the design. In response to these requests, the County indicated that additional study was needed. To date, this study has not yet been conducted. The Services Committee plans to urge the County to follow through on completing this study.

Public Safety

- **Deer Management**

In May 2005, the Services Committee responded to a request from Councilmember Andrews to provide a reaction to proposed Bill 43-05 that would amend the county weapons law designed to aid deer management. Bill 43-05, as recommended by the County's Deer Management Workgroup, was crafted to provide more flexibility for deer hunting in the County. ECCAB voted to write a letter that urged Council to support the Deer Management Workgroup's efforts to find solutions to the county's

deer problem. Additionally, ECCAB voted in favor of keeping a keen eye on issues of public safety such as maintaining the current “safety zone” that prohibits the discharge of a gun into or within 200 yards, rather than reducing it to 150 yards, of a building or camp designed for human occupancy.

Recreation

- **White Oak Recreation Center**

At the September 2005 meeting, the Services Committee heard an update on planning and development of the White Oak Recreation Center. The main news was that the project was moving forward. The concern was that the White Oak Recreation Center Advisory Board did not like the location of the recreation center; however, the consensus of ECCAB was the location was better than none. The Advisory Board was continuing to provide oversight regarding project planning and development and setting of fee structures. The ECCAB remains interested that the project remains on schedule and on budget. The Board will continue to monitor progress of this vitally needed facility.

- **Cricket Fields**

At the March 2006 meeting, ECCAB voted to write a letter to the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) regarding the need for a practice field for the Silver-Burt Cricket Club. In response to ECCAB, M-NCPPC stated in a letter dated July 2006 the possibility of providing both temporary and permanent cricket facilities in Montgomery County Parks. M-NCPPC had identified two parks where a temporary field might be constructed: at Columbia Local Park, as an overlay on softball fields #3 and #4 and at the Calverton Galway Local Park, on softball field #4 and soccer field #6. Based on an assessment of current demand and geographic parity, two permanent cricket grounds had been recommended – one up-county and one down-county. Currently, none of these projects is funded in the Capital Improvements Program. Additional involvement by ECCAB is needed along with the Planning Board, Council, and County Executive in the approval of the budget process. M-NCPPC is willing to meet with ECCAB staff, along with an appropriate representative for the Silver-Burt Cricket Club to discuss various options.

Outreach Committee

The Mission of the Outreach and Public Awareness Committee of the East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB) is to provide information to residents on services available at the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center (EMRSC). The Committee provides information to area residents, homeowner associations, and the religious and business communities. It also provides opportunities to reach the community through forums, town meetings and workshops.

Membership

The Outreach and Public Awareness Committee consists of 5 members of the East County Citizens Advisory Board who self-identify their committee interests. The Committee members include:

Tracy Dupree-Davis, Chair

Samuel Foster	William Strassberger
Kim Jones	Andre Carl Whisenton

The Committee is open to members of the community and meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center (EMRSC).

There were no Liaison members or Associate members that attended meetings during the past year. However, two of the meetings were relocated to the Fairland Community Center during the time that the Committee was coordinating the East County Art Show (March and April 2006). EMRSC staff attended each meeting to support the work of the Committee.

In the next fiscal year the Committee will strengthen the participation of Liaison Members from other county boards, civic and community organizations that facilitate and improve communications between and among community groups and the ECCAB. The Committee will also be working to identify expanded opportunities for reaching the East County residents and notifying them of the programs and services available. Additionally, the EMRSC staff have developed an extensive listing of all businesses in the region. That listing will be used to further the outreach activities of the community.

Burtonsville Day 2005



ECCAB members participated in the Burtonsville Day parade on Saturday, October 1, 2005, to help gain visibility for the Advisory Board.

The Committee, Board and Staff also manned an informational booth and provided free compost bins to all residents who completed a survey on East County needs. Brochures on the EMRSC and the ECCAB allowed the team to disseminate information about the services of the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center and the duties of the Advisory board.

Adopt-A-Road

The ECCAB continues to meet its obligations on its adopted road, which is a segment of Old Columbia Pike from Briggs Chaney Road south to Randolph Road. Board members met on Saturday, October 15 to clean the section of Old Columbia Pike from Briggs Chaney Road to Randolph Road. There were 21 volunteers for the day.

- Six (6) board members participated
- Fourteen (14) students participated from Greencastle Elementary, Banneker Middle, Briggs Chaney Middle and Blake High Schools.
- One parent volunteered with his children
- All students except the elementary school student received Student Service Learning hours toward graduation and one set of students had their dad participate as well.
- The team filled 22 bags of trash.
- Carl Whisenton provided lunch for all at Quiznos in the Briggs Chaney Plaza.
- Quiznos provided a discount to the group.

A thank you letter was sent from the Regional Service Center to all student volunteers. Future activities will include:

- Mail to all businesses in the corridor
- Mail to all churches for bulletin announcements in the corridor
- Get on the permanent list for Student Service Learning participants (requires training)
- Get 1-2 businesses to contribute for lunch
- Put group pictures on the website and in next newsletter

Legislative Reception



The Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center and Outreach Committee hosted a Legislative Reception on December 14, 2005. The program was designed to allow the ECCAB and community liaisons to meet informally with members of the state legislature and to learn more about their priorities in the 2006 legislative year. Remarks were presented by:

- Melanie Wenger- Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Office of County Executive
- Senator Ida Ruben- Maryland State Senate, District 20
- Senator Rona Kramer- Maryland State Senate, District 14
- Delegate Anne Frasier- 14th District
- Delegate Karen Montgomery- 14th District
- Delegate Herman Taylor- 14th District
- Delegate Gareth Murray- 20th District

County Council members Marilyn Praisner and Nancy Floreen were also in attendance. Violin performances were presented by students, Lauren D. Tucker and Michael D. Tucker.

East County Student Art Show 2006



The Third Annual East County Student Art Show was held on April 29, 2006 at the Fairland Recreation and Community Center. The event showcased the talents of students from our local East County schools. This year, for the first time, all elementary and private schools were invited to join the program. The show's theme was "Celebrating Eastern Montgomery County".

A special presentation was made by guest artist, **Simmie Knox**, who is renowned for his portraits of public officials, including the official portrait of President Bill Clinton. His portfolio also includes portraits of such celebrities as Hank Aaron, Bill Cosby, Thurgood Marshall, and Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg. The show included artist **Don Woodward**, a paraplegic who has developed his artistic skills through using two fingers of one hand and his mouth. Don exhibited his art and his story of hope and appreciation.

The Art Show featured the KIDS GALLERY, an expressive art workshop for children from 3 to 12 years of age. The exhibit of artwork was displayed for three days for the community to enjoy. The program featured representatives from the County Council, state legislature and county school board. Maryland State Delegate Herman Taylor presented certificates to student participants, Community Superintendent Susan Marks recognized art teachers, with supplies and refreshments donated by Starbucks Coffee, Chick-fil-A, Fast Frame Expert Picture Framing, Patches Gift Shop, Score Educational Center and others. An issues survey was also conducted asking residents to help identify community needs.

Colesville Strawberry Festival



The Committee, Board and Staff participated with an informational booth in the Colesville Strawberry Festival on Saturday, May 20, 2006. Materials on the EMRSC and the ECCAB as well as surveys on community needs were disseminated. .

Other activities and programs in which the **Outreach Committee** participated include:

- **EMRSC Clergy Luncheon on May 23, 2006**
- **EMRSC Winning Wardrobe Program for women in transition on June 16, 2006**
- **Revising the East County Citizens Survey to determine community needs.** (See appendix for survey)
- **Accommodating the MCPS Student Service Learning program to recruit more middle and high school students for service in East County programs**
- **Coordinating with more than 20 students who volunteered their time for the Adopt-A-Road cleanup and the Student Art Show.**
- **East County Community Day Festival on June 17, 2006**

Community and Economic Development Committee

The Community and Economic Development Committee handles issues related to transportation, business and institutional development, new housing and commercial construction projects. The Committee is open to members of the community and meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 8:00 p.m. at the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center.

Membership

The Community and Economic Development Committee consists of 6 members of the East County Citizens Advisory Board who self-identify their committee interests. The Committee members include:

Freda Hartman, Chair

David Kelly Co-Chair

Will Kenlaw

G. Stanley Doore

Gladstone James

Barbara Medina

Peach Orchard Estates

The committee heard testimony from residents in this community and tracked development plans in regards to the connection of Kinghouse Road to Paint Branch, in relationship to development of the Mitchell property.

After listening to resident concerns the Committee prepared a letter for the Board expressing concerns about the road, recognizing that road is called for in the Master Plan, yet expressing concerns about the very limited benefits of the road, and the significant adverse environmental impacts.

The County's plans for the road were ultimately altered to reflect the residents' concerns.

Route 29 Construction

The committee investigated the effect of the Route 29 construction at Burtonsville (i.e. the overpass at Route 198) and the adverse impact expressed by businesses, both in the two shopping centers and along Route 198. As a result of meetings with business owners, Councilwoman Praisner was able to have the County Council appropriate \$50,000 for a market study of the Burtonsville Business district.

Washington Adventist Hospital

The Committee has been keeping abreast of the possible relocation process for Washington Adventist Hospital. To better understand the situation, the Committee invited Jere Stocks, Hospital President, to address the Board. He explained that the hospital's new site would have to be 25-35 acres and would be fully operational by 2010. The Committee and the full Board supported efforts to locate the new hospital campus in East County Region.

Traffic Conditions and Planned Developments

The Committee continued to monitor the traffic conditions in East County, as well as the many significant development projects that are likely to impact future traffic patterns. Members reviewed congestion options beyond building the ICC, such as having carpool lanes, and more effective mass transit options. The Committee also considered some specific traffic suggestions to deal with individual development projects, particularly the wide-ranging developments expected in the vicinity of the new FDA campus and the proposed Kontera development.

FDA Development

The Committee continued to track a variety of proposed land use developments near the FDA site in White Oak. These include new construction as well as renovations

The committee also addressed traffic issues in that area, including traffic lights on Randolph Road, New Hampshire Avenue, Cherry Hill and O'Fallon

Burtonsville Shopping Center Redevelopment

The committee continues to monitor progress for the proposed redevelopment of the Burtonsville Shopping Center. Arranged Board presentations on this issue from Pierra Weis, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Chris Jones, representing project owners, and Stuart Rochester, Fairland Master Plan Committee.

These presentations generated significant public input regarding both the Shopping Center and a proposed change in the language of the zoning regulations that govern the Center's land use. The Board supported the proposed change, which was ultimately enacted, giving the Planning Board greater review authority for the redevelopment of the site, and all other similarly zoned parcels.

Discussion of Charrette

The Committee also began looking at conducting an organized public input process for the future needs of the East County. Among the approaches being considered is meeting with a charrette style format.

Affordable Housing

The Committee continued to monitor the housing market, available housing programs, and the growing gap between affordable housing availability and needs.

Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission issues.

The Committee closely tracked the problems with development regulation that vexed the Montgomery County Planning Board. Arranged a Board presentation by Derick Berlage, Chairman of the Planning Board, to explain how the board was addressing its problems, as well as planning for the continued rapid growth projected in the County.

APPENDIX A – East County Community Survey – Summary of Results

A total of 168 people responded to the survey offered at both the Student Art Show on April 29, 2006 and the Colesville Strawberry Festival on May 20, 2006. Survey statements were rated on a scale of 1 to 5 with the following definitions provided: 1 – Strongly Disagree; 3 – Neutral; 5 – Strongly Agree.

Emergency Services

- Most respondents, 70% agreed that emergency services (police, fire, medical) are good.
- A majority of respondents, 53% indicated that crime is a problem.
- Almost half, 49% believe gang activity is a problem.

Social Services

- 58% of respondents agreed that there are extensive recreational services and programs.
- Only 37% believe that there is easy access to social services, while 46% are neutral.

Transportation

- The most controversial issue was with respect to transportation. Responses were dispersed on whether or not road construction and maintenance on major roads allows for easy mobility – 38% agreed, 40% disagreed, and 22% were neutral.
- 43% agreed that road construction has improved transportation, 31% disagreed, and 21% were neutral.
- Results on the adequacy of mass transit were mixed – 38% saw it as adequate, 34% as inadequate, and 29% were neutral.
- 78% say traffic congestion has increased in the past two years.

Education

- Most respondents – 58% view schools in the east county as providing excellent educational opportunities and choices as opposed to 15% who disagree. A little over half see these school facilities as acceptable.

Business

- 73% responded that the Dutch Market is vital to the Burtonsville area and 71% also see it as important to have a shopping center in Burtonsville. The Dutch Market received the highest number of responses of Strong Agreement (88).

Miscellaneous

- Nearly half of respondents, 49% disagreed that there is ample affordable housing.
- The science and technology corridor in the White Oak area is seen as favorable by 60% of those who responded to this question.

APPENDIX B–

East County Community Survey – Combined Results 2006

1 = Strongly disagree 3 = Neutral 5 = Strongly agree

EMERGENCY SERVICES	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Emergency services (police, fire, medical) are good	4	4	39	79	39	165
Crime is not a problem	24	64	51	22	4	165
Gang activity is not a problem	21	60	52	28	4	165
SOCIAL SERVICES						
There are extensive recreation services and programs	2	14	52	71	27	166
The elderly have programs and services available to them	2	13	77	50	18	160
It is easy to access social services	3	15	78	48	14	158
TRANSPORTATION						
Road construction and maintenance on major roads allows for ease of mobility.	15	52	36	45	18	166
Road construction has improved transportation	14	40	43	56	15	165
There is adequate mass transit (bus, train)	25	31	48	48	15	167
Traffic congestion has increased in the past two years	6	4	18	60	71	159
EDUCATION						
Schools in the east county provide excellent educational opportunities and choices.	6	18	44	66	29	163
Facilities in east county schools are acceptable	8	19	49	64	17	157
BUSINESS						
It is important to have a shopping center in Burtonsville area to maintain shop. Opportunities.	6	10	27	55	63	168
The Dutch Market is vital to the Burtonsville area.	5	6	25	35	88	159
MISCELLANEOUS						
There is ample affordable housing	34	42	52	19	7	154
Business dev. Opport. exist for those interested in pursuing entrepreneurship and business expansion	3	20	86	34	9	152
The science and technology corridor in the White Oak area will improve economic opportunities	6	7	49	59	34	155

Attachment 1

CIP Priorities FY 07 East County Citizens Advisory Board Discussion with CAO Bruce Romer July 21, 2005

The Honorable Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive
Executive Office Building
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mr. Duncan:

On June 14, 2005 at the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center a CIP Forum was convened to receive public input on CIP projects ongoing, planned and proposed for East County.

As to projects that are either approved or planned for, the greatest concern is that the County ensures that timetables are adhered to. In particular, the planned elementary school in the Hillandale-White Oak area, the modernization of Paint Branch High School, the proposed Recreation/Community Center in White Oak and the renovation of the Good Hope Neighborhood Center to name a few. In addition, we continue to advocate prompt action on site selection and construction of a Police Headquarters for this area.

It is abundantly clear that the greatest concern facing those who attended the forum is the ongoing problem of traffic congestion. The construction of overpasses along Route 29 to accommodate east-west traffic may be a positive development when completed. However, the continued bottleneck on south bound Route 29 at the New Hampshire Avenue intersection because of two southbound lanes and the addition of traffic lights south of Lockwood Drive in the Burnt Mills area seems to frustrate the intent of better traffic flow.

In East County the greatest problem will clearly be when the FDA campus in Hillandale is in full use. The lack of adequate entrance and exit opportunities on the "back end" of the campus will exacerbate the traffic flow on New Hampshire Avenue and Route 29 severely. Of greater importance is the need for the County to actively pursue a policy with the State of Maryland and GSA to get as many employees of FDA into mass transit and out of their private autos.

Finally, we remain particularly concerned about the stunning lack of progress in addressing traffic and pedestrian safety issues around Paint Branch High School. There are no adequate crosswalks, sidewalks, guard rails or any signage to protect school children on the western side of Old Columbia Road. The exits and entrances of Paint Branch High School are

almost blind to one or the other lane of traffic on Old Columbia Pike. We have already received citizen complaints, which include having cars out of control driving on resident's front yard. This situation remains a fatality waiting to happen.

Thank you for your ongoing attention to the needs of the residents of East County. We are prepared to assist you in any way we can and welcome your views and thoughts on these and future concerns we will be raising on behalf of the people of East County.

Sincerely,

Stephen I. Jacobs, Chair
East County Citizens Advisory Board

Attachment 2
East County Citizens Advisory Board
2005-2006
- Sub Committees -

**Community and Economic Development
Committee**

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Services Committee

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